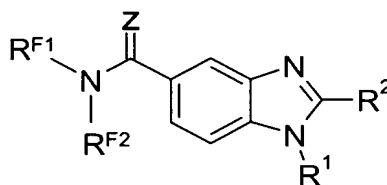


Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (original) A compound of formula I or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof:



I

wherein

R^{F1} and R^{F2} are independently C_{1-6} alkyl substituted by one or more groups selected from -F, -Cl, -Br, -NO₂, -CN, -OH, -CHO, -C(=O)-R' and -OR', wherein R' is a C_{1-3} alkyl;

Z is selected from O= and S=;

R^1 is selected from C_{1-10} alkyl, C_{2-10} alkenyl, C_{2-10} alkynyl, $R^3R^4N-C_{1-6}$ alkyl, R^3O-C_{1-6} alkyl, $R^3C(=O)N(-R^4)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl, $R^3R^4NS(=O)_2-C_{1-6}$ alkyl, $R^3CS(=O)_2N(-R^4)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl, $R^3R^4NC(=O)N(-R^5)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl, $R^3R^4NS(=O)_2N(R^5)-C_{1-6}$ alkyl, C_{6-10} aryl- C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{6-10} aryl-C(=O)- C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{3-10} cycloalkyl- C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{4-8} cycloalkenyl- C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{3-6} heterocyclyl- C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{3-6} heterocyclyl-C(=O)- C_{1-6} alkyl, R^3R^4N- , R^3O- , $R^3C(=O)N(-R^4)-$, $R^3R^4NS(=O)_2-$, $R^3CS(=O)_2N(-R^4)-$, $R^3R^4NC(=O)N(-R^5)-$, $R^3R^4NS(=O)_2N(R^5)-$, C_{6-10} aryl, C_{6-10} aryl-C(=O)-, C_{3-10} cycloalkyl, C_{4-8} cycloalkenyl, C_{3-6} heterocyclyl and C_{3-6} heterocyclyl-C(=O)-; wherein said C_{1-10} alkyl, C_{2-10} alkenyl, C_{2-10} alkynyl, C_{6-10} aryl- C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{6-10} aryl-C(=O)- C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{3-10} cycloalkyl- C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{4-8} cycloalkenyl- C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{3-6} heterocyclyl- C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{3-6} heterocyclyl-C(=O)- C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{1-10} hydrocarbylamino, C_{6-10} aryl, C_{6-10} aryl-C(=O)-, C_{3-10} cycloalkyl, C_{4-8} cycloalkenyl, C_{3-6} heterocyclyl or C_{3-6} heterocyclyl-C(=O)- used in defining R^1 is optionally substituted by one or more groups selected from halogen, cyano, nitro, methoxy, ethoxy, methyl, ethyl, hydroxy, and R^3R^4N- ;

R^2 is selected from the group consisting of C_{1-10} alkyl, C_{2-10} alkenyl, C_{2-10} alkynyl, C_{3-10} cycloalkyl, C_{3-10} cycloalkyl- C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{4-8} cycloalkenyl- C_{1-6} alkyl,

C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl-C₁₋₆alkyl, C₄₋₈cycloalkenyl, R³R⁴N-, C₃₋₅heteroaryl, C₆₋₁₀aryl and C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl, wherein said C₁₋₁₀alkyl, C₂₋₁₀alkenyl, C₂₋₁₀alkynyl, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl-C₁₋₆alkyl, C₄₋₈cycloalkenyl-C₁₋₆alkyl, C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl-C₁₋₆alkyl, C₄₋₈cycloalkenyl, C₃₋₅heteroaryl, C₆₋₁₀aryl or C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl used in defining R² is optionally substituted by one or more groups selected from halogen, cyano, nitro, methoxy, ethoxy, methyl, ethyl, hydroxy and R³R⁴N-; and

R³ and R⁴ are independently selected from -H, C₁₋₆alkyl, C₂₋₆alkenyl, C₂₋₆alkynyl, and a divalent C₁₋₆ group that together with another divalent C₁₋₆ group selected from R³ and R⁴ forms a portion of a ring.

2. (original) A compound as claimed in claim 1, wherein

R^{F1} and R^{F2} are independently selected from -CF₃, -CH₂CF₃, -CH₂CHF₂, -CHF₂CF₃, -CHF₂CHF₂, -CHF₂CH₂F, -CF₂CF₃, -CF₂CH₃, -CF₂CH₂F, -CF₂CHF₂, -CF₃, -CH₂CCl₃, -CH₂CHCl₂, -CH₂CBr₃, -CH₂CHBr₂, -CH₂NO₂, -CH₂CH₂NO₂, -CH₂CN, -CH₂CH₂CN, and -CH₂CH₂OCH₃;

Z is O=;

R¹ is selected from C₁₋₆alkyl, C₂₋₆alkenyl, C₂₋₆alkynyl, R³R⁴N-C₁₋₄alkyl, R³O-C₁₋₄alkyl, R³C(=O)N(-R⁴)-C₁₋₄alkyl, phenyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, phenyl-C(=O)-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₄₋₆cycloalkenyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl-C(=O)-C₁₋₄alkyl, R³R⁴N-, R³O-, R³R⁴NS(=O)₂-, C₆₋₁₀aryl, C₆₋₁₀aryl-C(=O)-, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl, C₄₋₆cycloalkenyl, C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl and C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl-C(=O)-; wherein said C₁₋₆alkyl, C₂₋₆alkenyl, C₂₋₆alkynyl, phenyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, phenyl-C(=O)-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₄₋₆cycloalkenyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl-C(=O)-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₆₋₁₀aryl, C₆₋₁₀aryl-C(=O)-, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl, C₄₋₆cycloalkenyl, C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl or C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl-C(=O)- used in defining R¹ is optionally substituted by one or more groups selected from halogen, cyano, nitro, methoxy, ethoxy, methyl, ethyl, hydroxy and R³R⁴N-;

R² is selected from the group consisting of C₁₋₆alkyl, C₂₋₆alkenyl, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₄₋₆cycloalkenyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₄₋₆cycloalkenyl, C₃₋₅heteroaryl, R³R⁴N-, phenyl and C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl, wherein said C₁₋₆alkyl, C₂₋₆alkenyl, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₄₋₆cycloalkenyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl-C₁₋₄alkyl,

C₄₋₆cycloalkenyl, C₃₋₅heteroaryl, phenyl or C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl used in defining R² is optionally substituted by one or more groups selected from halogen, cyano, nitro, methoxy, ethoxy, methyl, ethyl, hydroxy and R³R⁴N-; and

R³ and R⁴ are independently selected from -H, C₁₋₆alkyl and C₂₋₆alkenyl.

3. (original) A compound as claimed claim 1, wherein

R^{F1} and R^{F2} are independently selected from -CF₃, -CH₂CF₃, -CH₂CHF₂, -CHF₂CF₃, -CHFCHF₂, -CHFCH₂F, -CF₂CF₃, -CF₂CH₃, -CF₂CH₂F, -CF₂CHF₂, and -CF₃;

Z is O=;

R¹ is selected from C₁₋₆alkyl, C₂₋₆alkenyl, R³R⁴N-, R³R⁴N-C₁₋₄alkyl, R³O-C₁₋₄alkyl, R³C(=O)N(-R⁴)-C₁₋₄alkyl, phenyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, phenyl-C(=O)-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₄₋₆cycloalkenyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₆heterocyclyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₆heterocyclyl-C(=O)-C₁₋₄alkyl, phenyl, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl, C₃₋₆heterocyclyl and C₃₋₆heterocyclyl-C(=O)-; wherein said C₁₋₆alkyl, C₂₋₆alkenyl, R³R⁴N-C₁₋₄alkyl, R³O-C₁₋₄alkyl, R³C(=O)N(-R⁴)-C₁₋₄alkyl, phenyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, phenyl-C(=O)-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₄₋₆cycloalkenyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₆heterocyclyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₆heterocyclyl-C(=O)-C₁₋₄alkyl, phenyl, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl, C₃₋₆heterocyclyl or C₃₋₆heterocyclyl-C(=O)- used in defining R¹ is optionally substituted by one or more groups selected from halogen, cyano, nitro, methoxy, ethoxy, methyl, ethyl, hydroxy and R³R⁴N-;

R² is selected from the group consisting of C₁₋₆alkyl, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl, R³R⁴N-, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl, C₃₋₅heteroaryl, and phenyl wherein said C₁₋₆alkyl, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl, C₃₋₁₀cycloalkyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl, C₃₋₅heteroaryl, and phenyl used in defining R² is optionally substituted by one or more groups selected from halogen, cyano, nitro, methoxy, ethoxy, methyl, ethyl, hydroxy and R³R⁴N-; and

R³ and R⁴ are independently selected from -H, C₁₋₆alkyl and C₂₋₆alkenyl.

4. (original) A compound as claimed in claim 1, wherein

R^{F1} and R^{F2} are -CH₂CF₃;

Z is O=;

R¹ is selected from cyclohexylmethyl, cyclopentylmethyl, cyclobutylmethyl, cyclopropylmethyl, ethyl, propyl, adamantyl, adamantylmethyl, allyl, isopentyl, benzyl, methoxyethyl, tetrahydropyranylmethyl, tetrahydrofuranylmethyl, cyclohexyloxy, cyclohexylamino, dimethylaminoethyl, 4-pyridylmethyl, 2-pyridylmethyl, 1-pyrrolylethyl, 1-morpholinoethyl, 4,4-difluorocyclohexylmethyl, cyclohexylmethyl, 2-pyrrolidylmethyl, N-methyl-2-pyrrolidylmethyl, 2-piperidylmethyl, N-methyl-2-piperidylmethyl, 3-thienylmethyl, (2-nitrothiophene-5-yl)-methyl, (1-methyl-1H-imidazole-2-yl)methyl, (5-(acetoxymethyl)-2-furyl)methyl, (2,3-dihydro-1H-isoindole-1-yl)methyl, and 5-(2-methylthiazolyl); and

R² is selected from t-butyl, n-butyl, 2-methyl-2-butyl, cyclohexyl, cyclohexylmethyl, n-pentyl, isopentyl, trifluoromethyl, 1,1-difluoroethyl, N-piperidyl, dimethylamino, phenyl, pyridyl, tetrahydrofuranyl, tetrahydropyranyl, 2-methoxy-2-propyl, and N-morpholinyl.

5. (original) A compound selected from 2-*tert*-Butyl-1-(cyclohexylmethyl)-*N,N*-bis(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)-1*H*-benzimidazole-5-carboxamide and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof.

6. (canceled)

7. (canceled)

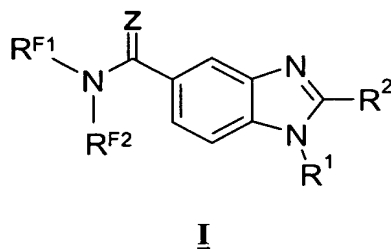
8. (canceled)

9. (canceled)

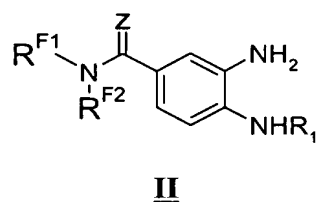
10. (currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound according to ~~any one of claims 1-5~~ claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

11. (currently amended) A method for the therapy of pain in a warm-blooded animal, comprising the step of administering to said animal in need of such therapy a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to ~~any one of claims 1-5~~ claim 1.

12. (original) A method for preparing a compound of formula I,



comprising the step of reacting a compound of formula II,



with a compound of $R^2C(=O)-X$ to form the compound of formula I,
wherein

R^{F1} and R^{F2} are independently selected from $-CF_3$, $-CH_2CF_3$, $-CH_2CHF_2$, $-CHFCH_2F$, $-CHFCHF_2$, $-CHFCH_2F$, $-CF_2CF_3$, $-CF_2CH_3$, $-CF_2CH_2F$, $-CF_2CHF_2$, and $-CF_3$;

Z is selected from $O=$ and $S=$;

X is selected from $-Cl$, $-Br$, $-I$, $-OH$, $-OCH_3$, and $-OCH_2CH_3$;

R^1 is selected from C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, $R^3R^4N-C_{1-4}$ alkyl, R^3O-C_{1-4} alkyl, $R^3C(=O)N(-R^4)-C_{1-4}$ alkyl, phenyl- C_{1-4} alkyl, phenyl- $C(=O)-C_{1-4}$ alkyl, C_{3-10} cycloalkyl- C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{4-6} cycloalkenyl- C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{3-6} heterocyclyl- C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{3-6} heterocyclyl- $C(=O)-C_{1-4}$ alkyl, phenyl, C_{3-10} cycloalkyl, C_{3-6} heterocyclyl and C_{3-6} heterocyclyl- $C(=O)-$; wherein said C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, $R^3R^4N-C_{1-4}$ alkyl, R^3O-C_{1-4} alkyl, $R^3C(=O)N(-R^4)-C_{1-4}$ alkyl, phenyl- C_{1-4} alkyl, phenyl- $C(=O)-C_{1-4}$ alkyl, C_{3-10} cycloalkyl- C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{4-6} cycloalkenyl- C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{3-6} heterocyclyl- C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{3-6} heterocyclyl- $C(=O)-C_{1-4}$ alkyl, phenyl, C_{3-10} cycloalkyl, C_{3-6} heterocyclyl or C_{3-6} heterocyclyl- $C(=O)-$ used in defining R^1 is optionally substituted by one or more groups selected from halogen, cyano, nitro, methoxy, ethoxy, methyl, ethyl, hydroxy, and R^3R^4N- ;

R^2 is selected from the group consisting of C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{3-6} cycloalkyl, R^3R^4N- , C_{3-6} cycloalkyl- C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{3-6} heterocycloalkyl- C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{3-6} heterocycloalkyl,

C₃₋₅heteroaryl, and phenyl wherein said C₁₋₆alkyl, C₃₋₆cycloalkyl, C₃₋₆cycloalkyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl-C₁₋₄alkyl, C₃₋₆heterocycloalkyl, C₃₋₅heteroaryl, and phenyl used in defining R² is optionally substituted by one or more groups selected from halogen, cyano, nitro, methoxy, ethoxy, methyl, ethyl, hydroxy and amino; and R³ and R⁴ are independently selected from -H, C₁₋₆alkyl and C₂₋₆alkenyl.